

# Status Update on Land Use Plan Amendments for Greater Sage-Grouse

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BLM Nevada State Office**

**13 Aug. 2015, Nevada Joint Military Affairs Committee**



Released 29 May 2015  
Published June 2015  
in 4 paper volumes

**Final Environmental Impact  
Statement (EIS)**

**and concurrent**

**Proposed Land Use Plan  
*Amendment***

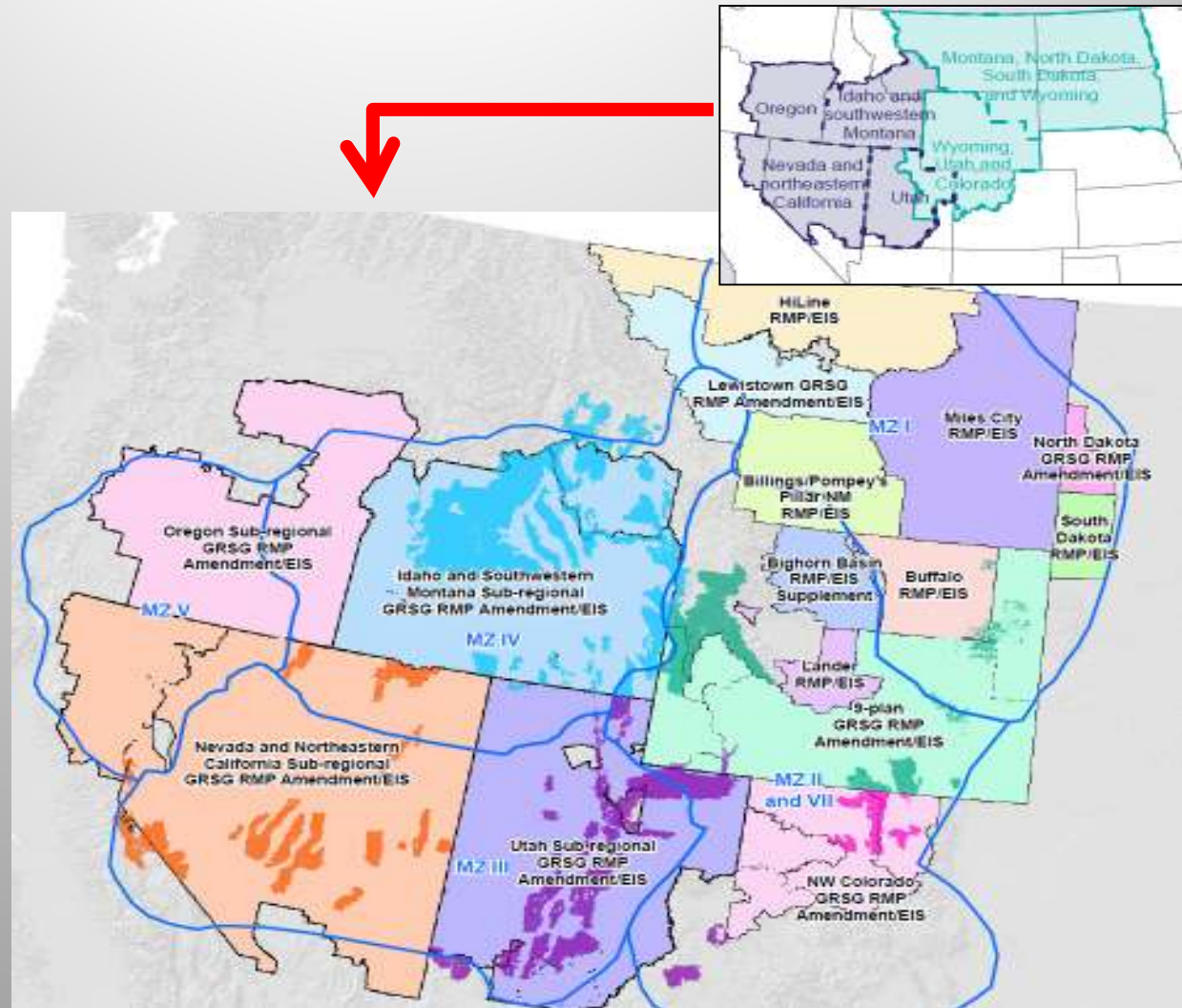
**(existing BLM Resource  
Management Plans and  
USFS Forest Plans will be  
immediately amended, updated)**

**Records of Decision  
late September 2015**



# Planning and Conservation Strategy

- 2 Planning Regions
- 15 EIS Sub-regions
- 98 existing Land Use Plans affected (both BLM and Forest Service)



# Purpose and Need (all 15 EIS Sub-regions)

Respond to the USFWS March 2010 “*warranted but precluded*” listing decision for Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG), under Endangered Species Act.



Identify and incorporate a appropriate conservation measures to conserve, enhance, and restore GRSG habitat by reducing, minimizing, or eliminating threats to that habitat.



# Nevada & California Sub-region EIS

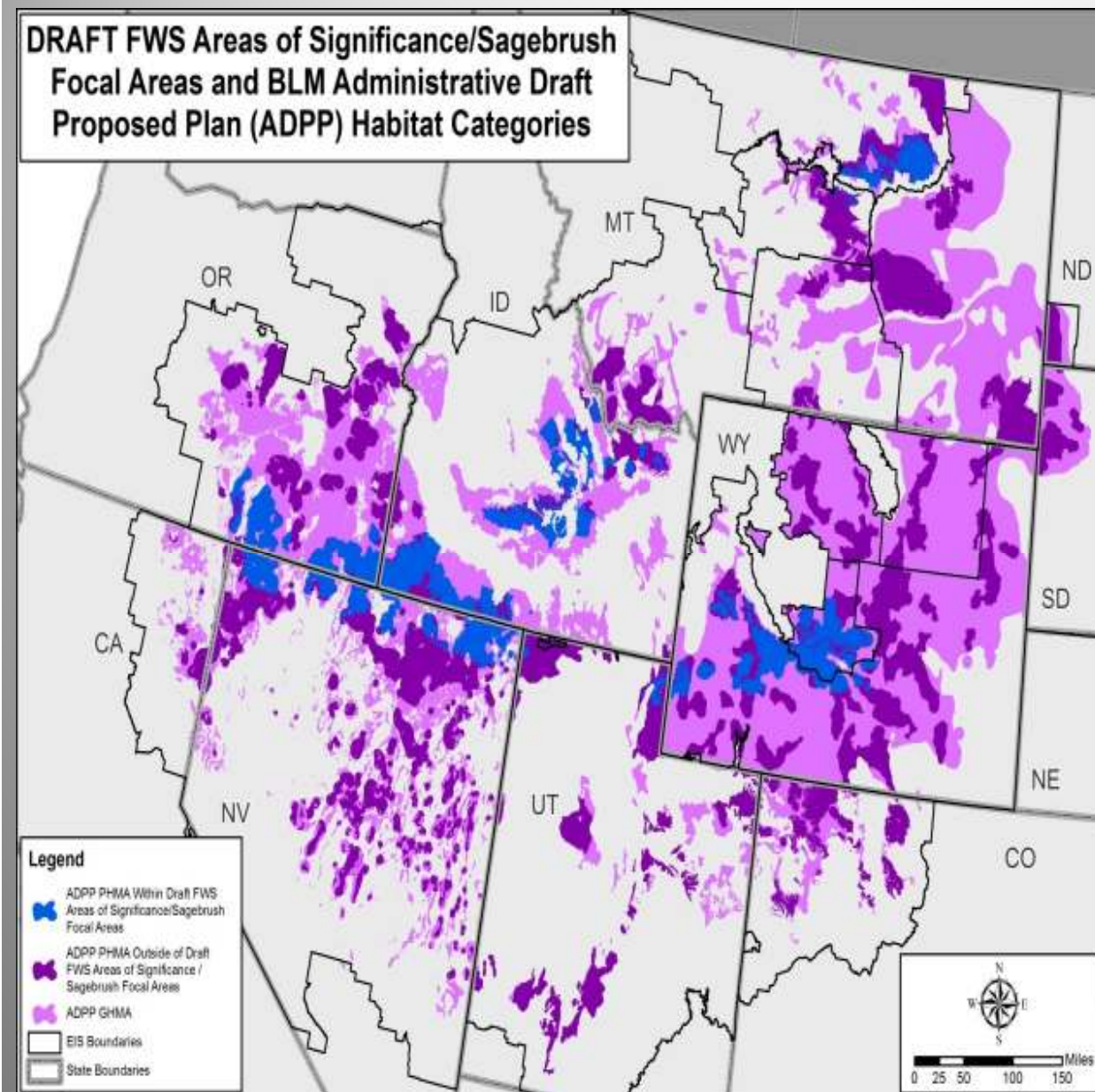
- Responds to Threats to Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) identified by USFWS Listing Decision (2010).
- BLM as *Lead Federal Agency* for the EIS
- Forest Service as *Cooperating Agency*.
- 24 Cooperating Agencies in Nevada and California.
- One FEIS for Nevada and Northeast California Sub-region.
- BLM and Forest Service have separate specific Plan Amendments covered under the FEIS, and subsequent separate Records of Decision.

## Timeline

- Draft EIS released, November 2013
- Public comments closed, May 2014
- Final EIS released, 29 May 2015 (cover date June 2015).
- Protest Resolution and Governor Consistency Review, summer 2015.
- Records of Decision approved, *late summer 2015*.



# Unprecedented Planning Effort



**General Habitat Management Areas**

**Priority Habitat Management Areas**

**Sagebrush Focal Areas**

“Strong, durable, and meaningful protection of federally administered lands in these areas will *provide additional certainty and help obtain additional confidence* for long-term sage grouse persistence.”

--Dan Ashe, USFWS Director  
October, 2014

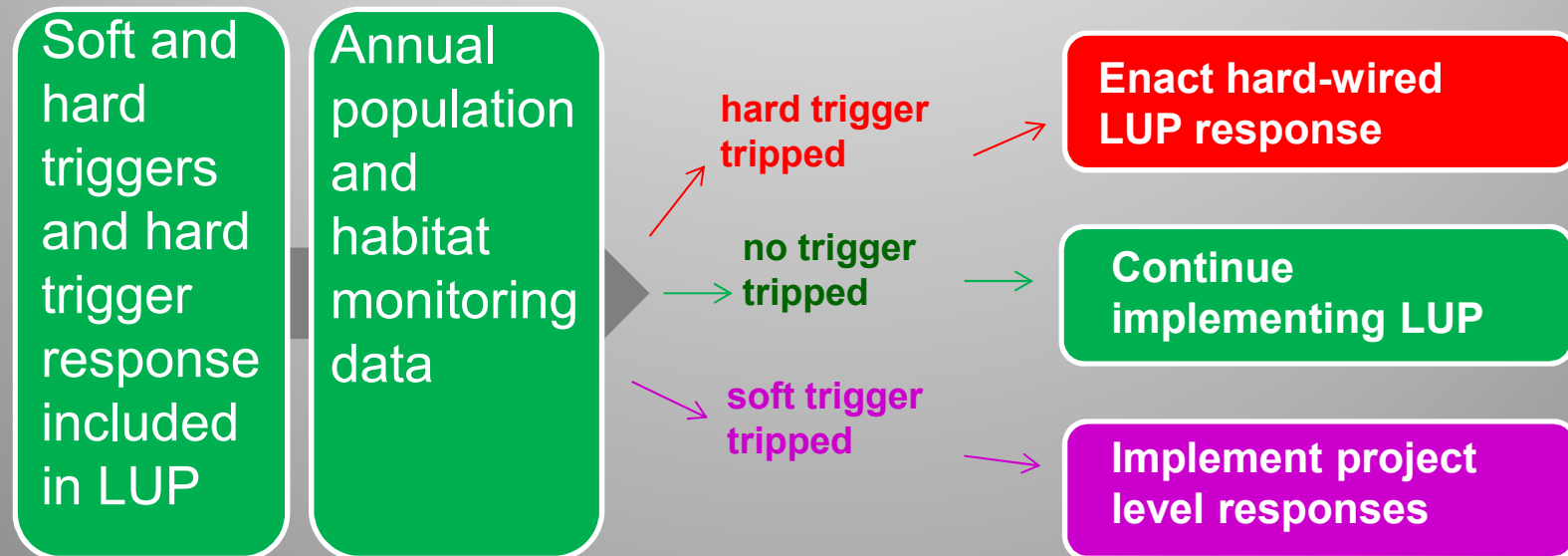
# Key Elements of Land Use Plans, RMPs

- Limit or eliminate new surface disturbance in sage-grouse *priority habitat* and minimize additional disturbance in *general habitat*
- Improve Greater Sage-Grouse habitat condition
- Fire Management: *Reduce the threat of rangeland fire in the Great Basin by placing added priority on the prevention and suppression of rangeland fire, and restoration of sagebrush landscapes threatened by rangeland fire, through improved Federal / State / local collaboration and coordination*
- Adaptive Management
- Mitigation Process



# Adaptive Management

- Soft and hard triggers and associated responses have been developed with local, State, and FWS experts, for the Land Use Plans (LUP).



# After the Records of Decision, Implementing the Plans and Monitoring

All authorized activities in GRSB habitat will comply with the land use plan decisions:

- Protective land use plan allocations
- Managing disturbance levels
- Establish multi-agency teams to implement Region-wide mitigation strategies and adaptive management

State of Nevada, Sagebrush Conservation Plan

- Established Sagebrush Ecosystem Technical Team (SETT)
- Nevada Conservation Credit System (CCS)
- BLM preparing an MoU with State of Nevada



# Interior Secretarial Order 3336

## *Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management, and Restoration*

BLM

Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON

ORDER NO. 3336

Subject: Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management and Restoration

**Sec. 1 Purpose.** This Order sets forth enhanced policies and strategies for preventing and suppressing rangeland fire and for restoring sagebrush landscapes impacted by fire across the West. These actions are essential for conserving habitat for the greater sage-grouse as well as other wildlife species and economic activity, such as ranching and recreation, associated with the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem in the Great Basin region. This effort will build upon the experience and success of addressing rangeland fire, and broader wildland fire prevention, suppression and restoration efforts to date, including the National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy, and ensure improved coordination with local, state, tribal, and regional efforts to address the threat of rangeland fire at a landscape-level.

**Sec. 2 Background.** The Department of the Interior is entrusted with overseeing the management of Federal lands for the benefit of current and future generations as well as the protection and recovery of imperiled species of flora and fauna and the ecosystems upon which they depend. Rangeland fires in the Great Basin of the Western United States have increased in size and intensity in recent years. The accelerated invasion of non-native annual grasses, in particular cheatgrass and medusahead rye, and the spread of pinyon-juniper across the sagebrush-steppe ecosystem, along with drought and the effects of climate change, have created conditions that have led to the increased threat of rangeland fires to the sagebrush landscape and the more than 350 species of plants and animals, such as mule deer and pronghorn antelope, that rely on this critically important ecosystem. As a result, the increasing frequency and intensity of rangeland fire also poses a significant threat to ranchers, livestock managers, sportsmen, and outdoor recreation enthusiasts

Secretarial Order 3336, January 2015



### AN INTEGRATED RANGELAND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Final Report to the Secretary of the Interior

May 2015

Final Report, May 2015



# *An Integrated Rangeland Fire Management Strategy*



## AN INTEGRATED RANGELAND FIRE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY



Final Report to the Secretary of the Interior

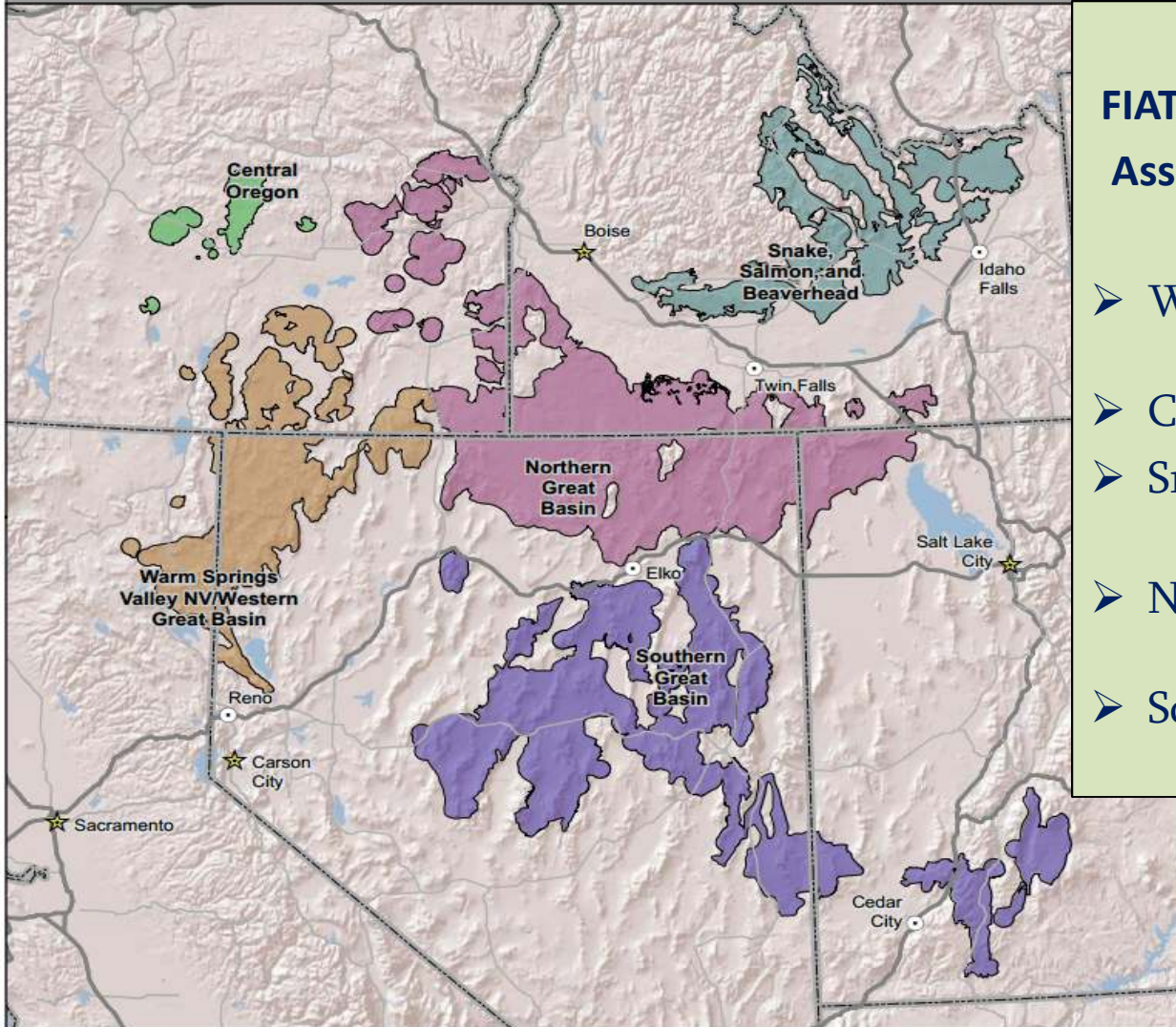
May 2013

- Implements Interior Secretarial Order 3336, *Rangeland Fire Prevention, Management and Restoration* (January 2015)
- Comprehensive science-based strategy
  - Reduce the size, severity and cost of rangeland fires
  - Address the spread of *cheatgrass* and other invasive species that exacerbate the threat of fire
  - Position fire management resources for more effective rangeland fire response
- Additional conservation and restoration strategy, due Dec. 2016



# FIAT Assessment Areas

National Operations Center  
Bureau of Land Management  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## FIAT (Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool) Assessment Areas:

- Western Great Basin  
(7.3 million acres)
- Central Oregon (814,000 acres)
- Snake/Salmon/Beaverhead  
(5.5 M acres)
- Northern Great Basin  
(16.0 million acres)
- Southern Great Basin  
(13.5 million acres)

### Legend

#### FIAT Assessment Areas

- Central Oregon
- Northern Great Basin
- Snake, Salmon, and Beaverhead
- Southern Great Basin
- Warm Springs Valley NV/Western Great Basin
- State Boundary

- Freeway or Other Major Road
- Other Major Road
- Cities
- Capital City



No Warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

1:5,000,000

February 2015

Date Saved: 2/10/2015

Data Sources: Bureau of Land Management, ESRI Basedata



# The 5 FIAT Assessments

- FIAT, *Fire and Invasives Assessment Tool*
- Completed April 2015 for the Great Basin Areas
- Identified activities for management strategies
  - fire operations
  - fuels management
  - post-fire rehabilitation
  - habitat restoration
- Implementation beginning in 2015 and will continue to be planned, implemented, and monitored with partners and cooperators.



# Conclusions

- BLM & Forest Service are completing GRSG land use plans and Records of Decision, by late summer 2015
- Conservation measures in these land use plans will address threats to GRSG populations
- This unprecedented, proactive partnership among agencies and other partners is critical to successes
  - *Restore habitats*
  - *Ensure mitigation when authorizing projects in sage-grouse habitats (avoid, minimize, and compensate)*
  - *Conduct monitoring*
  - *Evaluate conservation outcomes and adaptively manage as necessary*



**BLM**

**Sage-Grouse Planning Strategy**

## Basin and Range National Monument

Presidential Proclamation  
10 July 2015

704,000 acres  
existing BLM Lands,  
Ely District

Management Plan  
in 3 years, July 2018

